

MIDWIFERY.

64. *Quadruple Pregnancy*.—An example of this has been communicated to the Academy of Medicine of France, by M. Pecot, of Besançon. The labour pains were severe, but ineffectual, and the ergot was administered, and in about an hour an infant was born, the head presenting. The size of the abdomen not being diminished, M. P. introduced a hand into the uterus and felt several sacs, each containing a fœtus. He grasped that one which presented nearest to the neck of the womb and withdrew it readily by the breech. A third child was immediately afterwards expelled by the uterine efforts alone, and finally, M. P. ruptured the last sac, and extracted the fourth fœtus by the breech. The placenta was so large as to require artificial delivery. No divisions could be perceived on its uterine surface, but the insertion of the four cords, and the separate attachment of the correspondent membranes were perfectly distinct. The injection of air, wax and mercury, all demonstrated the independent vascularity of the four placentæ notwithstanding their close junction. All four children died, three on the fourth and fifth days; the fourth on the twenty-fourth day. The last had been confided to a wet nurse. M. P. thinks that with great care and means of nursing, all might have been raised.—*Archives Générales*, Jan., 1838.

65. *Delivery per Anum*.—Dr. MEKELN of Kettwig, was called to a female on the 1st of January, who had given birth to a strong and living infant through the anus, two hours before his arrival. The wound in the under part of the vagina, as well as that in the rectum, was of great size. The perineum, from the aperture of the anus to the vagina, was two-thirds torn, and very painful.

After three days both the urine and fæces passed by their ordinary channels. On the fourth day suppuration occurred; the wounds healed, and the woman in due course recovered her strength. Dr. Mekeln declares that he could discover no defect in the organization of the parts. The midwife states that at her arrival, she found the head of the child in the rectum.—*Dublin Journal*, March, 1837, from *Sanitäts-Berichte des Königlichen Medicinal-Collegium's*.

66. *Extraordinary size of an Infant at Birth*.—Dr. THÜMEN of Penzlaw, gives the case of a woman for whom he had brought nine children into the world by the aid of the forceps. She was strong and robust. Whilst pregnant of her tenth child she experienced much pain in the inguinal region, with uneasiness and loss of power in the whole right leg during labour. By great efforts the head of the child was freed, the shoulders remained behind, and resort was obliged to be had to the blunt hook to liberate them. Then it required still greater force to extricate the pelvis of the child. It was a boy, and weighed twenty pounds.—*Ibid.*, from *Beiträgen zum Sanitäts-Beichte des Potsdamer Regierungs-Bezirks*.

67. *Statistics of the Clinical Hospital of Midwifery of Berlin*.—The number of cases which occurred between the 1st of October, 1829, and the 31st of December, 1835, was 2,656. Of these births 2,035 were single; 21 were twin-births; so that the total number of children born was 2,077. The number of children born before the full period of gestation was 32, and the sexes were distributed in the following proportions:—Males, 1061; females, 1000; sex undetermined, 16. Of the mothers, 38 died in childbed. 1,913 children were born alive; 132 were born dead, and of the former 93 died within the first three weeks of their existence.

It is a remarkable fact, that of the children born in the hospital, only 1 in 30 were born dead; while of those born of mothers, treated by the pupils in their own houses, not less than 1 in 9 were born dead: a proof of the beneficial influence produced by prompt and efficient medical assistance, &c.

Presentations.—Regular presentation of the vertex, 1,911; face presentations, 18; presentation of the forehead, 5; buttocks, 47; knees, 2; feet, 2; irregular presentations, 54.

The labour was perfectly natural in 1,711 cases; the forceps was employed in 178; extraction of the fœtus in 55. In 4 cases irregular presentations of the child were very considerably improved by external manipulations, and by placing the mother in a commodious posture. In 57 cases turning by the feet, with or with-

out extraction, was had recourse to; and in 5 cases premature labour was brought on by art. Perforation of the head was performed in 6 cases; embryotomy in 2. The Cæsarean operation, before death, in 4 cases; after death in 2. Artificial extraction of the placenta was performed in 47 cases. In 57 artificial rupture of the membranes was thought necessary; and, finally, in three cases, abnormal conformation of the external parts rendered it necessary to divide the labia.

The following are some of the most remarkable circumstances connected with the art of midwifery, which occurred:—

Two of the patients were subject to habitual attacks of epilepsy. In the first case the disease was suspended during the first four months and a half of pregnancy; the paroxysms then returned, and continued in a very severe degree to the end of pregnancy. The labour, however, proceeded in the natural way, and the patient became speedily convalescent. In the second case the paroxysms were suspended during the whole course of pregnancy, and the labour was an easy one. Professor Busch assures us that, during his practice, he saw only a single case in which the epileptic attack came on during labour.

Rheumatism of the uterus occurred in several cases, but yielded to the appropriate treatment, without rendering it necessary to produce premature labour.

Menstruation during pregnancy.—This occurred once, twice, or even thrice during pregnancy, without affecting it in any pernicious manner. In two cases menstruation had not existed before conception, but set in, for the first time, after the women became pregnant.

Cholera.—In one case the woman was seized with this disease, and died in fifteen hours after the commencement of the attack. The motions of the child were felt ten hours previously to the mother's death. The Cæsarean operation was performed immediately, but the child was dead also.

Duration of Labour.—The longest labour continued for six days and six hours, and then terminated happily without the interference of art. In thirty cases labour was prolonged for three days and more without any injury to mother or child. The shortest labour terminated in 39 minutes.

Imperfect action of the uterus was very frequently observed. In all these cases, the powder of the secale cornutum was administered in doses of ten grains every ten or fifteen minutes. Of 175 cases in which it was given, its action on the uterus was manifest in 115. The ergot did not seem to exercise any unfavourable influence on the child, for, of 177 cases, only one was observed in which the death of the child could be traced to it as a cause.

Convulsions and Eclampsia.—These were observed in 11 cases; 6 were examples of true eclampsia; 5 of simple, though very severe convulsions. Of the former six, four patients died.—*Lancet*, from *Kleinert's Report*., April, 1837.

MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE AND HYGIENE.

68. *Sloughing from Vaccination—Danger from numerous Punctures.*—HENRY REES, Esq., says that he has seen four infants destroyed by sloughing produced by vaccination. Three of the four had been vaccinated with a dozen or fifteen punctures in each arm. A fifth child he had some difficulty in saving. The arm had not begun to slough, but it was hard, purple and swollen, affected with intense inflammation, dependent, apparently, on the large number of punctures it had received.—*Lancet*, Oct. 21, 1837.

CHEMISTRY AND PHARMACY.

69. *Mercury detected in Saliva.*—LEOPOLD GMELIN, of Heidelberg, has detected mercury in the saliva of a patient, salivated by mercurial frictions, but who had not taken any mercury by the mouth.—*Journ. de Pharm.* Dec. 1837, from *Annalen des Physik und Chem.*, Vol. XLI.